

THE CHARACTER AND PHILOSOPHY OF ROCK & ROLL MUSIC

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Rock and roll stole my heart as a young teenager, and I lived and breathed it until I was converted in 1973. I began with Grand Old Opry rock-a-billy and journeyed through 60s rock and part way through 70s rock before I was saved. When the Beatles appeared on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, I was in the 9th grade. The year I graduated from high school was “the summer of love.” When I was drafted into the Army two years later, the Woodstock movie was sweeping the land. During the year and a half I spent in Vietnam, I was stationed at Tan Son Nhut Airbase outside of Saigon. I was a clerk in a military police unit attached to MACV headquarters, the control center for the entire military operation in South Vietnam. We lived at the R&R out-processing center, and the unit’s job was to keep drugs from leaving the country on soldiers bound for R&R and in personnel containers being shipped to the States. We had access to every conceivable luxury in a military context: an Olympic-sized swimming pool, tennis courts, racket ball, gym, movie theater, photo processing labs. I even had almost full-time use of a jeep for trips to Saigon. (It was rough duty but someone had to do it!) One of the facilities I used extensively was the reel-to-reel recording studio. The Army had a massive library of music, and soldiers who lived at or visited MACV headquarters could record as much as they wanted. I spent countless hours there recording rock music while high on drugs. I also utilized the PX system to purchase a high-tech stereo system.

By the time I was discharged from the Army, I was all set to stock my first hippie apartment in Hollywood, Florida, with wall-to-wall rock & roll. My hippie heaven didn't last long, though. My buddies and I were buying and selling drugs, and two of us were arrested for possession of illegal drugs and public drunkenness. Though I got off lightly because it was my first offense, I lived in constant fear of being caught again and going to jail for a long time. I started to drift around. On one trip, I hitchhiked to northern California and back to central Florida. On the return trip, I met some young people from India who introduced me to reincarnation and the Self Realization Fellowship Society. I began to study eastern religion, and I excitedly made another trip to California to visit the headquarters of the Self-Realization Fellowship Society in Los Angeles. On the way, I won roughly \$70 in a slot machine in Las Vegas, and I thought it was an answer to my prayers!

Everything I was doing and thinking in those days was supported by rock music--drugs, Eastern religion, rebellion against authority, self-centeredness, licentious living, long hair, Communism (having collected Mao's *Red Book* and other Communist propaganda during my stay in Vietnam).

Rock music never encouraged me to be an obedient, submissive-to-authority, God-honoring person. It taught me that I was “born to be wild,” born to follow my natural impulses, born to live without rules.

After I was saved, I understood by the Spirit of God that rock music is intimately associated with everything that is evil and rebellious and anti-christ. I came to see that rock music fits the biblical definition of the worldliness which the Christian is not to love: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17).

I am convinced that rock music is the soundtrack to the end-time apostasy described in 2 Timothy.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

The first book I wrote as a young Christian was *Mom and Dad Sleep While the Children Rock in Satan's Cradle*, a warning about the dangers of rock music (long out of print).

Forty years later I am more convinced than ever that secular rock music is spiritually destructive and that “Christian rock” is a dangerous misnomer.

Rock music, which is an invention of wicked men to celebrate licentiousness and the flaunting of God’s holy laws, is not a proper medium for singing the praises of a holy God.

I have given my own testimony about the evils of rock music. Now consider the following statements from a wide range of other people about the character and philosophy of this music. Most of these are NOT Bible-believing Christians. In fact, many of these statements are from rock stars, and they are not naive about the nature of rock as many Christians are, and they do not have an agenda to whitewash rock as many Christians do.

Rock & Roll Is a Lifestyle

Rock and roll is not just music; it is a lifestyle, an attitude.

The book *Rock Facts*, which is published by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, Ohio, admits that rock is not just a type of music, IT IS A LIFESTYLE. “... rock and roll has truly become a universal language ... rock and roll also refers to an attitude, a feeling, a style, a way of life...” (*Rock Facts*, 1996, p. 7).

“What made rockabilly [Elvis Presley, Bill Haley, etc.] such a drastically new music was its spirit, a thing that bordered on mania. Elvis’s ‘Good Rockin’ Tonight’ was not merely a party song, but an invitation to a holocaust. ... Rockabilly was the face of Dionysus, full of febrile sexuality and senselessness; it flushed the skin of new housewives and made pink teenage boys reinvent themselves as flaming creatures” (Nick Tosches, *Country: The Twisted Roots of Rock ‘n’ Roll*, p. 58).

“...the New Left sprang ... from Elvis’ gyrating pelvis.... Elvis Presley ripped off Ike Eisenhower by turning our uptight young awakening bodies around. Hard animal rock energy beat/surged hot through us, the driving rhythm arousing repressed passions. Music to free the spirit.... Elvis told us to let go!” (Jerry Reuben, *Do It!*).

“Elvis Presley was one of the few people in our lifetime who changed things. You hear Mantovani in every elevator, but so what? Elvis changed our hairstyles, dress styles, our attitudes toward sex, all the musical taste” (David Brinkley, *NBC News*, cited by Larry Nager, *Memphis Beat*, p. 216).

“If you think rockabilly is just music, you’re wrong. Rockabilly’s always been an attitude” (Billy Poore, *RockABilly: A Forty-Year Journey*, p. 113).

“We live in a Christian society concerned with order: rock ‘n’ roll was always concerned with disorder. Punk rock promoted blatantly the word chaos. Cash from Chaos” (Jon Savage, *Time Travel: Pop, Media and Sexuality 1976–96*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1996, p. 151).

Rock Music and Rebellion

Rock and roll is about rebellion and living as you please.

“I’m free to do what I want any old time” (“I’m Free,” Rolling Stones, 1965).

“It’s my life and I’ll do what I want/ It’s my mind, and I’ll think what I want” (“It’s My Life,” popularized by The Animals, 1965)

“You got to go where you want to go/ do what you want to do” (“Go Where You Wanna Go,” Mamas and Papas, 1966).

“It’s your thing/ do what you want to do” (“It’s Your Thing,” Isley Brothers, 1969)

“We don’t need no thought control” (Pink Floyd, “Another Brick in the Wall,” 1979).

“This is a story about control. My control. Control of what, I say? Control of what I do, and this time I’m gonna do it my way. ... got my own mind. I want to make my own decision; when it has to do with my life, I want to be the one in control...” (Janet Jackson, “Control,” 1986).

"Nothing's forbidden and nothing's taboo when two are in love" (Prince, "When Two Are in Love," 1988).

"... the only rules you should live by [are] rules made up by you" (Pennywise, "Rules," 1991).

"So what we get drunk/ So what we don't sleep (smoke weed)/ we're just having fun/ We don't care who sees/ So what we go out/ That's how its supposed to be/ Living young and wild and free" ("Young, Wild and Free" by Snoop Dog and Wiz Khalifa, 2011).

"We can do what we want; we can live as we choose. See there's no guarantee; we've got nothing to lose" (Paul McCartney, "New," 2013).

"The whole Beatles idea was to do what you want" (John Lennon, cited by David Sheff, *The Playboy Interviews with John Lennon and Yoko Ono*, p. 61).

"... the whole idea of rock 'n' roll is to offend your parents" (Rock drummer King Coffey, *The Truth about Rock*, p. 30).

"... rock 'n' roll is more than just music--it is the energy center of a new culture and youth revolution" (advertisement for *Rolling Stone* magazine).

"In a sense all rock is revolutionary. By its very beat and sound it has always implicitly rejected restraints and has celebrated freedom and sexuality" (*Time* magazine, Jan. 3, 1969).

"Rock 'n' roll is a beast. Well-intentioned people thought you could pick it up and cuddle it. They forgot it had claws of the bands--The Slits, The Damned, Bad Manners, The Vibrators, The Stranglers and Meat Loaf. ... I know, because I was one of them. Behind every sweet doowop and bebop is an unfettered sexuality and sympathy for the devil: a violently anarchic--in the face of all harmony, peace and progress. People could see that when it first happened and it hasn't changed. Anybody with a penn'orthy of grey matter could see it was trouble" (Ray Gosling, BBC Radio 4 program "Crooning Buffoons," *The Listener*, Feb. 11, 1982).

"Rock 'n' roll, if not actually inventing the teenager, split the pop followers into the under twenties and the rest" (Bob Dawbarn, *Melody Maker*, Feb. 10, 1968).

"Rock music has widened the inevitable and normal gap between generations, turned it from something healthy--and absolutely necessary to forward movement--into something negative, destructive, nihilistic" (George Lees, music critic, *High Fidelity*, February 1970).

"The [rock] medium is so anti-Christian in its ethos--libertarian, anti-authoritarian, equating infatuation and sexual attraction with love, and on the drug-culture fringe--that when Christians assume that ethos to communicate the message of self-denial, cross-

“Modern Music and Evangelism,” *Background to the Task*, Evangelical Alliance Commission on Evangelism, 1968).

“Although the music has changed over the years, the rebellious urges that created it remain the same. ... I was reminded once more of the basic appeal of rock and roll--its irreverent, nose-thumbing quality” (Ellen Willis, *TV Guide*, January 1979, p. 15).

“Most of it [rock music] is used as a vehicle for anti-Christian propaganda” (Graham Cray, appendix to J. & M. Prince, *Time to Listen, Time to Talk*, cited in *Pop Goes the Gospel*, p. 86).

“Rock music has got the same message as before. It is anti-religious, anti-nationalistic and anti-morality. But now I understand what you have to do. You have to put the message across with a little honey on it” (John Lennon, spoken not long before his death in 1980, *Pop Goes the Gospel*, p. 84).

“Rock and roll is simply an attitude” (Johnny Thunders, cited in *Rock Facts*, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, p. 14).

“The [hippie] counterculture is the world’s first amplified music” (Timothy Tyler, “Out of Tune and Lost in the Counterculture,” *Time*, Feb. 22, 1971, pp. 15-16).

“There’s no way to grasp the subversive force of this now-innocent-sounding music unless you can feel a little of what it meant to be a kid hearing it as it was played for the first time. ... It was taboo-shattering music ... It hit you where you lived. It belonged to the kids and only the kids. It set them apart. Rock ‘n’ roll was their joy. It was their freedom” (Michael Ventura, cited by Richard Powers, *The Life of a 1950s Teenager*).

“Rock concerts are the churches of today. Music puts them on a spiritual plane. All music is God” (Craig Chaquico, Jefferson Airplane guitarist, *Why Knock Rock?*, p. 96).

“A new music emerged, again completely nonintellectual, with a thumping rhythm and shouting voices, each line and each beat full of the angry insult to all western [Christian] values ... their protest is in their music itself as well as in the words, for anyone who thinks that this is all cheap and no more than entertainment has never used his ears” (H.R. Rookmaaker, *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture*, pp. 188, 189, 190; Rookmaaker was a Dutch professor of art, music, philosophy, and religion; he was the founder of the art history department at the Free University in Amsterdam).

“Rock music is evil because it is to music what Dada and surrealism are to art--atheistic, chaotic, nihilistic” (David Noel, *The Legacy of John Lennon*, p. 42).

“‘Rock and roll,’ itself a blues music term for sex, suggested rebellion and abandon as much as it did a new style of music when it first jarred adult sensibilities in the 1950s. ‘When you’re growing up,’ says Jerry Kramer, a prominent director of music videos, ‘you

like rock and roll for one reason: Because your parents don't" ("What entertainers are doing to your kids," *U.S. News & World Report*, October 28, 1985, page 47).

"Rock radicalized teenagers, because it estranges them from the traditional virtues which they no longer see as relevant" (Martin Perlich, *The Cleveland Press*, July 25, 1969, p. 1N).

"Why do young people go to these rock shows? Because it's their idol; it's their god, in other words. They love rock and roll" (Chick Huntsberry, former bouncer, *The Truth about Rock*, p. 60).

"Rock music has always held seeds of the forbidden. ... Rock and Roll has long been an adversary to many of the basic tenets of Christianity" (Michael Moynihan, *Lord's of Chaos*, p. x).

"Rock 'n' roll marked the beginning of the revolution. ... We've combined youth, music, sex, drugs, and rebellion with treason, and that's a combination hard to beat" (Jerry Rubin, *Do It!*, 1970, pp. 19, 249).

"The preachers and moral guardians who in rock's infancy warned us of the evils of the music weren't that far off base. Rock--at least as practiced by The Who and a few others--is defiant, it is antisocial, it is revolutionary ... Anarchy, that's what The Who is all about" (Robert W. Butler, *Kansas City Times*, Aug. 24, 1979, p. 6C).

"Violence and rebellion have been shaking their fists at the world through rock music since its inception. Though rebellion, in one form or another, is present in the lives of many of today's youth, constant meditation on anger and alienation, through listening repeatedly to rock music, magnifies and distorts those feelings" (*Why Knock Rock?*, p. 65).

"The main purpose of rock and roll is celebration of the self" (Daryl Hall of Hall and Oates, interview with Timothy White, 1987, *Rock Lives*, p. 594).

"There is actually very little melody, little sense in the lyrics, only rhythm [in rock music]. The fact that music can both excite and incite has been known from time immemorial. ... Now in our popular music, at least, we seem to be reverting to savagery ... and youngsters who listen constantly to this sort of sound are thrust into turmoil. They are no longer relaxed, normal kids" (Dimitri Tiomkin, *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, Aug. 8, 1965; Dr. Tiomkin is a famous composer and conductor).

"The great strength of rock 'n' roll lies in its beat ... it is a music which is basically sexual, un-Puritan ... and a threat to established patterns and values" (Irwin Silber, Marxist, *Sing Out*, May 1965, p. 63).

"Rock and roll challenged the dominant norms and values with a genuinely Dionysian fervor. Compared to an ancient Dionysian revel--trances, seizures, devotees tearing sacrificial animals to pieces with their bare hands and eating the meat raw--a rock and roll

performance is almost tame. ... We must never forget our glorious Dionysian heritage” (*Rock & Roll an Unruly History*, pp. 150, 155).

“... fifties rock was revolutionary. It urged people to do whatever they wanted to do, even if it meant breaking the rules. ... From Buddy the burgeoning youth culture received rock’s message of freedom, which presaged the dawn of a decade of seismic change and liberation. ... Buddy Holly left the United States for the first time in 1958, carrying rock ‘n’ roll--the music as well as its highly subversive message of freedom--to the world at large. ... laying the groundwork for the social and political upheavals rock ‘n’ roll was instrumental in fomenting in the following decade” (Ellis Amburn, *Buddy Holly*, pp. 4, 6, 131).

The Bill Haley song “Rock the Joint” encouraged young people to throw off all restraints. “It was a song about having such a good time that nothing mattered: ‘We’re gonna tear down the mailbox, rip up the floor/ Smash out the windows and knock out the door.’”

Gene Simmons of Kiss said: “What I write is pretty much a belief in a certain lifestyle which is a free soul, a free person, doing basically what he wants to do without hurting anybody else” (WCCO-TV, *Five P.M. Report*, Feb. 18, 1983).

“Rock & roll is about striking out independently, not caring about your parents’ disapproval” (Pop Machine, quoted in “Metallica? OK, but we still don’t like the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame,” *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 23, 2008).

Rock Music and Sex

“If any music has been guilty by association, it is rock music. It would be impossible to make a complete list, but here are a few of the ‘associates’ of rock: drug addicts, revolutionaries, rioters, Satan worshippers, drop-outs, draft- dodgers, homosexuals and other sex deviates, rebels, juvenile criminals, Black Panthers and White Panthers, motorcycle gangs, blasphemers, suicides, heathenism, voodooism, phallixism, Communism in the United States (Communist Russian outlawed rock music around 1960), paganism, lesbianism, immorality, demonology, promiscuity, free love, free sex, disobedience (civil and uncivil), sodomy, venereal disease, discotheques, brothels, orgies of all kinds, night clubs, dives, strip joints, filthy musicals such as ‘Hair’ and ‘Uncle Meat’; and on and on the list could go almost indefinitely” (Frank Garlock, *The Big Beat*, pp. 12-13).

“For white Memphis, the forbidden pleasures of Beale Street had always come wrapped in the pulsing rhythms of the blues. ... Elvis’s [rock & roll] offered those pleasures long familiar to Memphians to a new audience” (Larry Nager, *Memphis Beat*, p. 154).

“The main ingredients in rock are ... sex and sass” (Debra Harry, *Hit Parader*, Sept. 1979, p. 31).

“Rock is the total celebration of the physical” (Ted Nugent, rock star, *Rolling Stone*, Aug. 25, 1977, pp. 11-13).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is 99% sex” (John Oates of the rock duo Hall & Oates, *Circus*, Jan. 31, 1976).

“Rock music is sex. The big beat matches the body’s rhythms” (Frank Zappa of the Mothers of Invention, *Life*, June 28, 1968).

“That’s what rock is all about--sex with a 100 megaton bomb, the beat!” (Gene Simmons of the rock group Kiss, interview, *Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

“Everyone takes it for granted that rock and roll is synonymous with sex” (Chris Stein, rock manager, *People*, May 21, 1979).

“Pop music revolves around sexuality. I believe that if there is anarchy, let’s make it sexual anarchy rather than political” (Adam Ant, *From Rock to Rock*, p. 93).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is sex. Real rock ‘n’ roll isn’t based on cerebral thoughts. It’s based on one’s lower nature” (Paul Stanley, cited by John Muncy, *The Role of Rock*, p. 44).

“Rock music is sex and you have to hit them [teenagers] in the face with it” (Andrew Oldham, manager of the Rolling Stones, *Time*, April 28, 1967, p. 54).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is all sex. One hundred percent sex” (Debbie Harry of the rock band Blondie, cited by Carl Belz, “Television Shows and Rock Music,” as it appeared in *The Age of Communication*, William Lutz, Goodyear Publishing Company, 1974, p. 398).

“At the very least, rock is turning sex into something casual” (James Connor, *Newsweek*, May 6, 1985).

“The throbbing beat of rock-and-roll provides a vital sexual release for its adolescent audience” (Jan Berry of Jan and Dean, cited by Blanchard, *Pop Goes the Gospel*).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is synonymous with sex and you can’t take that away from it. It just doesn’t work” (Steven Tyler, *Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

“... rock music has one appeal only, a barbaric appeal to sexual desire—not love, not eros, but sexual desire undeveloped and untutored. Rock gives children, on a silver platter, with all the public authority of the entertainment industry, everything their parents always used to tell them they had to wait for until they grew up and would understand later” (Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987, p. 73).

“Sex is really an exciting part of rock and roll. When I dance onstage, I dance to turn people on. When I’m dancing, I turn myself on as well. Dancing is a sexual thing to do, you know” (Adam Ant, *Rock Fever*, May 1984, p. 13).

“When you’re in a certain frame of mind, particularly sexually-oriented, there’s nothing better than rock and roll ... because that’s where most of the performers are at” (Aerosmith’s manager, *USA Today*, Dec. 22, 1983, p. D5).

“Living on the brink of disaster at all times is what Rock ‘n Roll is all about” (Kevin Cronin, REO Speedwagon, *Newsweek*, Dec. 20, 1976).

“Rock is the perfect primal method of releasing our violent instincts” (Ted Nugent, rock star, *Circus*, May 13, 1976).

“‘Rock and roll,’ itself a bluesmusic term for sex, suggested rebellion and abandon as much as it did a new style of music when it first jarred adult sensibilities in the 1950s. ‘When you’re growing up,’ says Jerry Kramer, a prominent director of music videos, ‘you like rock and roll for one reason: Because your parents don’t’” (“What entertainers are doing to your kids,” *U.S. News & World Report*, October 28, 1985, page 47).

“After ten years of bland, brilliant music, we were back to what Rock ‘n’ Roll should be--nasty, crude, rebellious people’s music” (Tom Robinson, punk rocker, *Dictionary of American Pop/Rock*, p. 294).

“Rock and roll is the darkness that enshrouds secret desires unfulfilled, and the appetite that shoves you forward to disrobe them” (Timothy White, *Rock Lives*, p. xvi).

“Rock and roll aims for liberation and transcendence, eroticizing the spiritual and spiritualizing the erotic, because that is its ecumenical birthright” (Robert Palmer, *Rock & Roll an Unruly History*, p. 72).

“There is a great deal of powerful, albeit subliminal, sexual stimulation implicit in both the rhythm and [the] lyrics of rock music” (Dr. David Elkind, chairman of the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study at Tufts University in Massachusetts, *The Hurried Child*, Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley Publishing Co., 1981, p. 89).

“We respond to the materiality of rock’s sounds, and the rock experience is essentially erotic” (Simon Frith, *Sound Effects*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1981, p. 164).

“Listen, rock ‘n’ roll ain’t church. It’s nasty business. You gotta be nasty too. If you’re goody, goody, you can’t sing or play it...” (Lita Ford of heavy metal group *The Runaways*, *Los Angeles Times*, August 7, 1988).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is pagan and primitive, and very jungle, and that’s how it should be! The moment it stops being those things, it’s dead ... the true meaning of rock ... is sex, subversion and style” (Malcolm McLaren, punk rock manager, *Rock*, August 1983, p. 60).

“The best rock & roll music encapsulates a certain high energy--an angriness--whether on record or onstage. That is, rock & roll is only rock & roll if it’s not safe. ... Violence and

energy--and that's really what rock & roll's all about" (Mick Jagger, as told to Mikal Gilmore, *Night Beat*, p. 87).

"The present rock 'n' roll scene, Lennon's legacy, is one giant, multi-media portrait of degradation--a sleazy world of immorality, venereal disease, anarchy, nihilism, cocaine, heroin, marijuana, death, Satanism, perversion, and orgies" (David Noebel, *The Legacy of John Lennon*, 1982, p. 15).

"The themes of rock 'n' roll include rebellion, homosexuality, satanism, the occult, drugs, murder, suicide, incest, vulgarity, sadomasochism, anti-patriotism and above all, free sex" (Fletcher Brothers, *Rock Report*, Lancaster: Starburst Publishing, 1987).

"Its admirers want to make rock appealing by making it respectable. The thing can't be done. Rock is appealing because it's vulgar ... Rock is the quintessence of vulgarity. It's crude, loud, and tasteless" (Robert Pattison, *The Triumph of Vulgarity*, 1987, preface, p. 4).

"Rock music involves a neurophysiological conditioning in connotation or felt meaning, linking aggression and sexuality. Aggression linked with sexuality. ... Our basic claim is that the rock music itself induces a behavioral link between aggression and sexuality" (Drs. Daniel and Bernadette Skubik, *The Neurophysiology of Rhythm*).

"At base and at its best, rock 'n' roll is a celebration of human sensuality" (Gail Pellert, *Christian Rock*, New York: Gannett, 1985, p. 23).

"[Our music is intended] to change one set of values to another ... free minds ... free dope ... free bodies ... free music" (Paul Kantner of the Jefferson Airplane, cited by Ben Fong-Torres, "Grace Slick with Paul Kantner," *The Rolling Stone Interviews*, 1971, p. 447).

"Rock and roll was something that's hardcore, rough and wild and sweaty and wet and just loose" (Patti Labelle, cited in *Rock Facts*, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, p. 17).

"Sex, violence, rebellion—it's all part of rock 'n' roll" (John Mellencamp, *Larson's Book of Rock*, p. 170).

"Rock 'n' roll doesn't glorify God. You can't drink out of God's cup and the devil's cup at the same time. I was one of the pioneers of that music, one of the builders. I know what the blocks are made of because I built them" (Little Richard, *The Dallas Morning News*, Oct. 29, 1978, p. 14A).

"[The Rolling Stones] are raw, sloppy, savage, oppressively intense, base, bolsh, scurvy, mean, mesmerizing, cold, perverse, raunchy, decadent, and self-indulgent revolutionaries. ... their music is rugged, sinewy, insinuating ... it reflects their way of living" (Michael Ross, *Rock Beyond Woodstock*, p. 13).

inside, flow with it, to the point where it consumes you, and all you can feel or hear or think about is the music. ... Such open sensuality” (Tom McSloy, rock music performer, “Music to Jangle Your Insides,” *National Review*, June 30, 1970, p. 681).

“Rock and roll is fun, it’s full of energy, it’s full of laughter. It’s naughty” (Tina Turner, cited in *Rock Facts*, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, p. 12).

“Mystery and mischief are the two most important ingredients in rock and roll” (Bono, cited in *Rock Facts*, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, p. 12).

Rock Music’s Addictiveness

“Rock music is an ideal vehicle for individual or mass hypnosis” (Andrew Salter, *Pop Goes the Gospel*, p. 20).

“Rock music in particular has been demonstrated to be both powerful and addictive, as well as capable of producing a subtle form of hypnosis in which the subject, though not completely under trance, is still in a highly suggestive state” (John Fuller, *Are the Kids All Right?*, New York: Times Books, 1981).

“Pop music is the mass medium for conditioning the way people think” (Graham Nash of Crosby Stills & Nash, *Hit Parader Yearbook*, No. 6, 1967).

“What is undeniable about rock is its hypnotic power. It has gripped millions of young people around the world and transformed their lives” (William Schafer, *Rock Music*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1972, p. 79).

“Atmospheres are going to come through music, because the music is a spiritual thing of its own ... you hypnotize people to where they go right back to their natural state which is pure positive the subconscious what we want to say ... People want release any kind of way nowadays. The idea is to release in the proper form. Then they’ll feel like going into another world, a clearer world. The music flows from the air; that’s why I connect with a spirit, and when they come down off this natural high, they see clearer, feel different things...” (Jimmy Hendrix, rock star, *Life*, Oct. 3, 1969, p. 74).

“An incessant beat does erode a sense of responsibility in much the same way as alcohol does. ... You feel in the grip of a relentless stream of sound to which something very basic and primitive in the human nature responds” (David Winter, *New Singer, New Song*).

“Heavy rock is body music designed to bypass your brain and with an unrelenting brutality induce a frenzied state amongst the audience” (Dave Roberts, *Buzz* columnist, Christian rock magazine in Britain, April 1982).

“Music is the most powerful medium in the world” (Tori Amos, *George*, April/May 1996).

“Don’t listen to the words, it’s the music that has its own message. ... I’ve been stoned on the music many times” (Timothy Leary, New Age guru and promoter of LSD, *Politics of Ecstasy*).

“[Rock music] is the strongest drug in the world” (Steven Tyler of Aerosmith, *Rock Beat*, Spring 1987, p. 23).

“Music works in mysterious ways. Once it goes in [the ear] you really have no say about what it does to you” (Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones, “Music Quotes,” *Cynthia Radio*).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is like a drug. When you’re singing and playing rock ‘n’ roll, you’re on the leading edge of yourself. You’re tryin’ to vibrate, tryin’ to make something happen. It’s like there’s somethin’ alive and exposed” (Neil Young, cited by Mickey Hart, *Spirit into Sound*).

Janis Joplin, who died young from the rock & roll lifestyle, describes her first big concert in these words: “I couldn’t believe it, all that rhythm and power. I got stoned just feeling it, like IT WAS THE BEST DOPE IN THE WORLD. It was SO SENSUAL, so vibrant, loud, crazy” (Joel Dreyfuss, “Janis Joplin Followed the Script,” *Wichita Eagle*, Oct. 6, 1970, p. 7A).

Rock Music as Religion

It is not surprising that rock & roll has been adapted for contemporary worship because it has the power that contemporary worshippers are looking for, the power to create strong emotional experiences, the power literally to take control of you and to carry you into new realms.

Rock & rollers have long described their music in glowing spiritual and religious terms, but the religious fervor that is described in the following quotes is not that pertaining to the Spirit of God, it is that pertaining to the “god of this world” who masquerades as an angel of light.

“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14).

Rock & roll (in its broadest sense, which encompasses all forms of secular pop music featuring the back beat) is one of the chief gods and idols of the modern world. To think that God would be pleased with the Christianizing of rock & roll is to think that He would be pleased with the Christianizing of Hindu idols.

“Rock concerts are the churches of today. Music puts them on a spiritual plane. All music is God” (Craig Chaquico, Jefferson Airplane guitarist, *Why Knock Rock?*, p. 96).

“Rock music is more than music, IT’S LIKE CHURCH” (Jimi Hendrix, *The Dick Cavett Show*, July 21, 1969).

“We’re making the music into ELECTRIC CHURCH MUSIC, A NEW KIND OF BIBLE you can carry in your hearts” (Jimi Hendrix, quoted in *Crosstown Traffic* by Charles Murray, p. 161).

“... THE MUSIC IS A SPIRITUAL THING of its own” (Jimi Hendrix, interview with Robin Richman “An Infinity of Jimis,” *Life* magazine, Oct. 3, 1969).

Jimi Hendrix said: "I used to go to Sunday School BUT THE ONLY THING I BELIEVE IN NOW IS MUSIC" (Curtis Knight, *Jimi*).

Paul Stanley, guitarist for KISS, said he turns into “a holy roller preacher” during concerts. “I’m testifying and getting everybody riled up for the power of almighty rock ‘n’ roll” (*Guitar Player*, November 1974).

Bruce Springsteen used to open his concerts with these words: “WELCOME TO THE FIRST CHURCH OF THE ROCK, BROTHERS AND SISTERS” and has stated that he was dead until rock and roll changed his life. In response to a screaming crowd he hollers, “Do you believe that if you die during the course of this show, due to excitement, that you’re going to heaven?” (*The Rock Report*, p. 82). *USA Today* observed: “Displaying an awesome musical chemistry, Springsteen and his E Streeters at times turned the Meadowlands’ Continental Airlines Arena [in East Rutherford, New Jersey] into a raucous revival tent, playing off themes of redemption, salvation and resurrection via rock ‘n’ roll throughout the nearly three-hour show. ... Typical of the pacing was the roof-raising Light of Day, which saw the Rev. Springsteen roaringly promise his flock ‘the power, the majesty and the ministry of rock ‘n’ roll...” (*USA Today*, July 19, 1999, p. 9D).

On the 25th anniversary of Elvis Presley’s death Springsteen said: “ELVIS IS MY RELIGION. But for him, I’d be selling encyclopedias right now.”

“For many participants, ELVIS WEEK HAS OBVIOUSLY BECOME A QUASI-RELIGIOUS OCCASION. The Meditation Garden is an American Lourdes, a place where miracles sometimes happen. Every year on August 15, the sick and the lame hobble up the hill, full of hope. As every one of the faithful well knows, on the first anniversary of Presley’s death, a fan aimed his camera skyward and photographed a cumulus cloud forming a familiar profile, right down to the famous pompadour. Elvis is watching over them. Addressing co-religionists in a letter printed in an Elvis fan club publication, an enthusiast from Belgium put it this way: “Dear friends, our LOVE and RESPECT for Elvis are unlimited ... Let’s continue to work hard for him, because his LIGHT on our world today is the guarantee to give HOPE and PEACE for the next generations. ... We believe

in Elvis just like we believe in God ... and I'm sure that we are on the right way" (James Miller, *Flowers in the Dustbin*, p. 345).

Robbie Kreiger, guitarist for the Doors, said the band members were "revivalists and WANTED OUR AUDIENCE TO UNDERGO A RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE" (*Break on Through--the Life and Death of Jim Morrison*, p. 190).

Remembering Bob Marley's rock concerts, Judy Mowatt, one of his backup singers said: "It was a crusade, it was a mission. We were like sentinels, like lights. ON TOUR THE SHOWS WERE LIKE CHURCH; Bob delivering the sermon. There were mixed emotions in the audience: you see people literally crying, people in a frenzy, on a spiritual high ... These concerts were powerful and highly spiritual. There was a power that pulled you there. It was a clean feeling ... For months and maybe years it stays with you" (Sean Dolan, *Bob Marley*, p. 95).

Grateful Dead concerts have been described as "A PLACE TO WORSHIP. "The band was the high priest, the audience the congregation, the songs the liturgy, and the dancing the prayer" (Gary Greenberg, *Not Fade Away: the Online World Remembers Jerry Garcia*, p. 42). "The Grateful Dead embody not only the cultic potentials historically inherent in rock 'n' roll, but the entire submerged linkage between rock and religion. ... the Dead's legendary live concerts bear uncanny resemblance to religious festivals..." (*Stairway to Heaven*, p. 196). In interviews with David Gans (*Playing in the Band*), Grateful Dead band members admitted that THEY LOOKED UPON THEIR MUSIC AS SOMETHING LIKE RELIGION. Lesh said, "WE USED TO SAY THAT EVERY PLACE WE PLAYED WAS CHURCH." Garcia added, "... on a certain level it's a religion to me, too."

Before he died, Muddy Waters admitted that the BLUES WAS HIS RELIGION (James Rooney, *Bossmen: Bill Monroe and Muddy Waters*, p. 137).

"I LOOK AT ROCK LIKE A RELIGION" (Blackie Lawless of W.A.S.P., *Faces*, Feb. 1985, p. 53).

A music reviewer described a Backstreet Boys concert as "worship" (*Express Writer*, August 16, 1998).

Jim Morrison of the Doors said, "I FEEL SPIRITUAL UP THERE PERFORMING" (*Newsweek*, Nov. 6, 1967, p. 101). As late as the early 1990s, Morrison's gravesite was the third most popular visitor destination in Paris, France. In July 1991, on the 20th anniversary of Morrison's death, nearly 1,000 fans gathered outside the gates of the cemetery.

"As a self appointed messiah, I view music as far more than just entertainment" (John Denver, cited in *The Rock Report*, p. 10).

“Now Billy Squier is taking the gospel to America and Europe, PREACHING HIS OWN ROCK SERMONS in sold-out concerts” (Circus magazine, cited in *The Rock Report*, p. 10).

Judas Priest had an album called “Defenders of the Faith,” and when asked about its meaning they replied, “We’re defending the faith of heavy metal music” (*The Rock Report*, p. 10). They said: “Heavy metal isn’t just music to us. It’s a philosophy and a way of life” (Judas Priest, *Hit Parader*, July 1984).

In his song “You Can’t Kill Rock & Roll,” Ozzy Osbourne sang, “... ROCK 'N' ROLL IS MY RELIGION AND MY LAW/ Won’t ever change.”

“MUSIC IS MY RELIGION” (Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones, cited by Stanley Booth, *Dance with the Devil*, p. 109).

“On many an occasion WHEN I AM DANCING, I HAVE FELT TOUCHED BY SOMETHING SACRED. In those moments, I felt my spirit soar, and become one with everything that exists” (Michael Jackson, cited by Steve Turner, *Hungry for Heaven*, p. 12).

“Through the music you reach the spiritual. MUSIC IS VERY INVOLVED WITH THE SPIRITUAL, as we know from the Hare Krishna mantra” (George Harrison, cited by Steve Turner, *Hungry for Heaven*, p. 71).

Brian Eno says that WHEN HE DISCOVERED ROCK AND ROLL, IT WAS “A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE” to him and IT OCCUPIED THE RELIGIOUS PART OF HIS LIFE (Turner, *Hungry for Heaven*, p. 150).

Dr. Paul King, medical director of the adolescent unit at Charter Lakeside Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, was told by drug addicted teens that he had to understand their music if he wanted to understand their world. “He conducted a study of 470 adolescent patients and found that 60 percent of them designated heavy metal music as their musical choice. They said the music was a very important influence in their lives. In fact, IT WAS THEIR NEW RELIGION” (Terry Watkins, *The Truth about Rock*, p. 35).

Sting of the group Police said, “The pure essence of music is very spiritual” (Musician, Feb. 1987, p. 41). He says: “MY RELIGION WOULD BE MUSIC, AND I HAD JUST RECEIVED MY FIRST SACRAMENT [WHEN HE FIRST HEARD THE BEATLES AT AGE 11]” (*USA Today*, Jan. 27, 1984, p. 2D).

“In spiritual terms MUSIC IS A MAGICAL OPERATION, A VEHICLE FOR MAN TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE GODS. Depending on whom the celebrants invoke, this can mean soaring to heaven on the voices of angels or raising beasts from the pits of hell” (Michael Moynihan, *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, p. 1).

"Hip hop shows were LIKE CHURCH FOR ME WAY MORE THAN ACTUAL CHURCH WAS. A lot of lessons I learned were from my personal interpretations of the songs I would listen to. I felt like God was speaking to me through these people's thoughts and words" (Darlina, HipHop fan, commenting on "The Metaphysics of HipHop," Sept. 1, 2006, <http://rapyouodohiphopyoulive.tribe.net/thread/88ad663f-b18d-46ea-aed2-c693f961b5f6>).

"Dancing at raves may be construed as the method by which ravers worship the god of altered consciousness" (Russell Newcombe, *The Guardian*, Jul. 22, 1995).

"Andrew WK truly helped me let go. HIS SHOWS WERE LIKE CHURCH SERVICES, I felt rejuvenized, and for weeks following them I was happier and made people around me happier (which in turn made me feel even better)" (Andrew WK Paradigm Shift, <http://www.dontstopthenoise.com/josh.html>).

"Their [Far's] live shows were like church (without all that religion). They inspired a lot of kids my age" (<http://www.amazon.com/Water-Solutions-Far/dp/customer-reviews/B0000062H7>).

"Rock My Religion" is a black and white documentary by Dan Graham that describes the nature of rock & roll as religion to multitudes of people.

Many rock fans exhibit devotion that has a religious intensity. Consider the following testimony which speaks for many others that could be given: "I'm obsessed. I'd do anything for her. . . I LIVE FOR BRITNEY SPEARS, you don't understand. I live for Britney Spears. I live for her. . . Like my life wouldn't be complete without her" (unidentified fan interviewed on *ET*, July 10, 1999).

A fan of the Backstreet Boys said, "I love Nick! For Nick, I'll die. If God says, 'Die and let Nick live,' I'll do that" ("Boy Wonders," *People* magazine, Sept. 14, 1998).

The memorial to John Lennon in Central Park, across the street from the Dakota building where he was murdered, has religious overtones. A steady stream of fans place flowers and other offerings on the monument, which is inscribed with the title of his song "Imagine." The 20th anniversary of Lennon's death in December 8, 2000, was observed in many parts of the world in ways that had religious overtones. Events included candlelight vigils by Lennon fans, the lighting of large "peace flames," and the 24-hour playing of Beatle records by radio stations.

Sadly, it is not only the secular world that worships rock musicians. Popular evangelical speaker Josh McDowell made the following amazing statement: "Thank God for Steve Camp. The body of Christ is enriched because we have his heart and his music. My oldest daughter thinks he hung the moon" (*CCM magazine*, August 1991, p. 15). Someone might argue that McDowell was just talking off the cuff and didn't really mean that his daughter worshipped CCM musician Steve Camp, but it was Almighty God who hung the moon, and it is foolish to apply such devotion to a mere man.

Rock Music and Rebellion

At its core, rock music has always been about rebellion against established authority and biblical morality. The following are just a few of the examples that can be given to prove this.

“Rock ‘n’ roll marked the beginning of the revolution. ... We’ve combined youth, music, sex, drugs, and rebellion with treason, and that’s a combination hard to beat” (Jerry Rubin, *Do It!*, 1970, pp. 19, 249).

Little Richard’s biographer notes that the “wild freedom” of his music “changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of young people” (Charles White, *The Life and Times of Little Richard*, p. 81). His biographer says, further, that Little Richard “freed people from their inhibitions, unleashing their spirit, ENABLING THEM TO DO EXACTLY WHAT THEY FELT LIKE DOING” (White, p. 66).

This is true for rock music in general, but the “wild freedom” of rock & roll is not the freedom promised in Jesus Christ.

The Bill Haley song “Rock the Joint” encouraged young people to throw off all restraints. “It was a song about having such a good time that nothing mattered: ‘We’re gonna tear down the mailbox, rip up the floor/ Smash out the windows and knock out the door.’”

“The great strength of rock ‘n’ roll lies in its beat. ... it is a music which is basically sexual, un-Puritan ... and a threat to established patterns and values” (Irwin Silber, Marxist, *Sing Out*, May 1965, p. 63, cited in *The Legacy of John Lennon*, p. 85).

“Rock radicalizes teenagers because it estranges them from the traditional virtues which they no longer see as relevant” (Martin Perlich, rock producer, *Cleveland Press*, July 25, 1969, p. 1N).

“... fifties rock was revolutionary. It urged people to do whatever they wanted to do, even if it meant breaking the rules. ... From Buddy the burgeoning youth culture received rock’s message of freedom, which presaged the dawn of a decade of seismic change and liberation. ... Buddy Holly left the United States for the first time in 1958, carrying rock ‘n’ roll—the music as well as its highly subversive message of freedom—to the world at large. ... laying the groundwork for the social and political upheavals rock ‘n’ roll was instrumental in fomenting in the following decade” (Ellis Amburn, *Buddy Holly*, pp. 4,6,131).

“Rock—at least as practiced by The Who and a few others—is defiant, it is antisocial, it is revolutionary ... Anarchy, that’s what The Who is all about” (Robert W. Butler, *Kansas City Times*, Aug. 24, 1979, p. 6C).

Rock critic Vern Stefanic noted that “John Lennon was more than a musician” because he promoted “an anti-God theme, and anti-America, pro-revolution stance” (*Tulsa World*, Dec. 12, 1980, p. 20).

Lennon explained to *Playboy* magazine that “the whole Beatles idea was to do what you want ... do what thou wilt, as long as it doesn’t hurt somebody” (Lennon, cited by David Sheff, *The Playboy Interviews with John Lennon and Yoko Ono*, p. 61).

Paul McCartney admitted the Beatles’ part in destroying traditional convention: “There they were in America, all getting house-trained for adulthood with their indisputable principle of life: short hair equals men; long hair equals women. Well, we got rid of that small convention for them. And a few others, too” (Barbara Ehrenreich, “Beatlemania: Girls Just Wanted to Have Fun,” cited by Lisa Lewis, *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*, p. 102).

AC/DC’s song “Highway to Hell,” a very popular rock anthem which continues to be played decade after decade, describes the rebellion that has been promoted by rock from its inception. It is a call to throw off moral restraint and to ignore eternal judgment: “Don’t need a reason/ Don’t need a rhyme/ Ain’t nothing’ that I’d rather do/ Goin’ down/ Party time/ My friends are gonna be there too/ I’m on the highway to Hell ... No stop signs, speed limits, nobody’s gonna slow me down/ Grab the wheel, gonna spin it, nobody’s gonna mess me around/ Hey, Satan, paid my dues, playing in a rocking band/ Hey, Momma, look at me/ I’m going to the promised land/ I’m on a highway to hell/ Highway to hell/ Highway to hell/ Highway to hell/ Mmmmmmm don’t stop me.”

Satanist Aleister Crowley, whose philosophy was “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law,” has had a great influence on rock musicians. We have documented this elsewhere in this book.

The band Lynyrd Skynyrd was named to mock a former gym teacher, Leonard Skinner, who had talked to the band members about their long hair and rebellious attitudes. The group “stressed cocky, boisterous hard rock.”

John Mellencamp’s songs “Jack and Diane” and “Authority Song” were anthems of youthful rebellion. He said, “I fight authority ... I’ve been doing it since I was a young kid and I’ve come out grinning” (cited by John Muncy, *The Role of Rock*, p. 24). He also said: “I swear because I know it’s not socially acceptable, so I do it around people I know are going to be upset. I hate things that are this-is-the-way-you-are-supposed-to-behave. That is why I hate schools, governments, and churches” (*People*, Oct. 11, 1982).

Of the Rolling Stones’ *Beggars Banquet* album, the *Yale Daily News* reported that “six of the ten songs are blatantly revolutionary, their heavy rhythm pounding, mobilizing, appealing to the people.” The chorus to “Gimme Shelter” says: “Rape! Murder! It’s just a shot away!” Mick Jagger told critics of the album: “Anarchy is the only slight glimmer of hope. Anybody should be able to go where he likes and do what he likes” (*Rock Lives*, p. 178).

Black Sabbath drummer Bill Ward says, “We were rebelling and we were rebelling against just about everything” (*Black Sabbath*, p. 9).

“I’ve always gotten a kick out of defying authority” (Dave Mustaine of the group Megadeth, *Rock Scene Spotlights* #3, p. 34, cited by John Muncy, *The Role of Rock*, p. 25).

The song “Bad Boys” by Wham describes the rebellious rock & roll attitude: “Dear mommy, dear daddy, you had plans for me. I was your only son. When you tried to tell me what to do, I just shut my mouth and smiled at you. ... Dear mommy, dear daddy, now I’m 19. As you see, I’m handsome, tall, and strong. So what the ---- gives you the right to look at me as if to say, ‘...what went wrong?’ But don’t try to keep me in tonight because I’m big enough to break down the door” (Wham, “Bad Boys”).

Elton John’s song “Think I’m Gonna Kill Myself” is about a rebellious teenager who contemplates suicide. The lyrics say: “I’m getting bored being part of mankind/ There’s not a lot to do no more, this race is a waste of time/ People rushing everywhere, swarming around like flies/ Think I’ll buy a forty-four and give ‘em all a surprise/ Yeah, think I’m gonna kill myself, cause a little suicide/ ... A rift in my family, I can’t use the car/ I gotta be in by ten o’clock, who do they think they are?” Elton John’s song “Bennie and the Jets” also described rebellion against God-ordained authority: “We shall survive/ let us take ourselves along/ where we fight our parents out in the streets/ to find who’s right and who’s wrong.”

Poison’s “Let Me Go to the Show” promotes rebellion against parents: “Mamma, please let me go to the show/ I dig those bad boys playing rock ‘n’ roll/ No way, son, you can’t go out tonight/ So I got real upset and put up the biggest fight/ Out the window shimmy down the tree/ I take a look around, make sure no one’s watching me/ I steal the keys and take my old man’s Chevrolet/ I can hear my Mama scream from ten miles away” (Poison, “Let Me Go to the Show”).

“What we were telling the kids [with the song ‘Shout at the Devil’] was to stand up and shout at whoever was putting them down--whether it was their parents, their teachers or their bosses. That’s who the real devil is” (Niki Sixx from Motley Crue, *Heavy Metal Heroes*, Summer 1987, cited by John Muncy, *The Role of Rock*, p. 29).

Madonna promotes rebellion against parents. “I think your parents give you false expectations of life. All of us grow up completely misguided” (Madonna, *Spin*, February 1988, p. 48). Her song “Papa Don’t Preach” is about a pregnant unmarried girl who tells her father not to preach at her.

Michael Diamond of the Beastie Boys summed up their attitude toward authority when he said: “We’re probably a parent’s worst nightmare” (*People*, Feb. 9, 1987, p. 93). “The Beastie Boys’ smash hit ‘Fight for Your Right,’ in which they talk about parents forcing their kids to go to school when they ‘don’t wanna go,’ and then the teachers treating them ‘like some kind of jerk,’ then ‘that hypocrite’ dad gets upset cause the kid is smoking, and ‘living at home is such a drag’ cause mom threw away the kid’s ‘best porno mag,’ then the

on to tell about how the parents are upset over the clothes they are wearing, and the long hair, and of course how they complain about 'that noise' they're listening to. The video version makes the parents and the other kids look like a bunch of 'nerds' and the Beastie Boys are a real cool group of guys who are just fighting for their 'right to party!'" (John Muncy, *The Role of Rock*, pp. 30,31). Their first album, *Licensed to Ill*, was advertised as "an album guaranteed to bug your parents (or someone you love)." Even so, the album was the fastest-selling album in the history of Columbia Records, quickly selling more than three million copies.

"Anarchy is the title of one punk group and the theme of hundreds of other punk groups just like them. Anarchy even has their own symbol ... a circled capital A. You'll see it on their posters and albums declaring that they publicly support anarchy, which the dictionary defines as 'the absence of government, a state of lawlessness; rebellion against authority'" (John Muncy, *The Role of Rock*, pp. 31,32).

The rebellion promoted by Judas Priest is evident in their song "We Don't Need No Parental Guidance": "Everyday you scream at me to turn the music low. Well if you keep on screaming you'll make me deaf you know. You always chew me out, because I stay out late. Until your three-piece suite comes back in date, get one thing straight ... We don't need, no, no, no, no parental guidance here!" (Judas Priest, "We Don't Need No Parental Guidance Here"; the video shows thousands of young people with fists raised high; cited by John Muncy, *The Role of Rock*, p. 34). Judas Priest guitarist Glen Tipton says this song "tells the parents of the world to leave their kids alone. ... We've had enough of groups of mothers telling their kids what they should or should not listen to" (*Hit Parader*, May 1981, p. 69). Vocalist Rob Halford agrees: "I know for a fact that rock's got all the elements of rebellion against your mom and dad. You want to stay up late, want to party all night long, you don't want to do your homework" (*Hit Parader*, Feb, 1983, p. 59). Their album *Sin after Sin* wickedly encourages young people to worry about "getting saved later" and to enjoy sin today.

"I figured the only thing to do was swipe their kids. I still think it's the only thing to do. By saying that, I'm not talking about kidnapping, I'm just talking about changing their value systems, which removes them from their parents' world very effectively" (David Crosby of the group Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Ben Fong-Torres, "David Crosby," *Rolling Stone Interviews*, p. 410).

"Another perfect example of out-right rebellion was a smash hit by a group called Twisted Sister (a very fitting name). The title of the song speaks for itself, 'We're Not Going to Take It.' The song plainly taught young people that no one has a right to tell you anything, no matter who they are. The video version of the song shows a family sitting around the supper table. The tension can be felt as the children sheepishly look at their hard nose dad. The oldest teenager asks to be dismissed and goes up to his room to listen to his favorite group as he 'plays' along on his guitar. Meanwhile the dad begins to question what his son is listening to and proceeds up to the son's room. When he enters the room, he begins to throw things around and complains about the boy's messy room. Then the dad begins to verbally abuse his son. Of course the producers of the video really

timid look as his dad makes all kinds of remarks about the son's music. Finally, dad stops and says, 'What are you going to do with your life?' The son, with a rebellious grin, replies, 'I wanna Rock' and with that, he strums the guitar and from its force, blows dad out the window of the two-story house to the driveway below. Then the young boy turns into Dee Snider, the leader of the band, and proceeds to get his dad back by throwing him down the stairs, pulling his hair, and knocking him out with the door. The sad thing about it was this song stayed at the top of the music charts for weeks" (Muncy, pp. 35,36).

Snider admits that Twisted Sister's goal is rebellion against parents. He said: "...no self-respecting kid wants to listen to a band that his father approves of" (Dayton [Ohio] *Daily News*, Oct. 9, 1984). He said further: "The type of music we play and the way we look is every parent's nightmare, so I guess in some ways we are standing up for the kids against their parents. That comes across in the video, and it's in the songs as well. But that's the basic attitude of rock and roll; you like it because your parents hate it..." (Dee Snider, *Hit Parader*, April 1985, p. 68).

"That's why Heavy Metal exists. It is the only form of rock 'n' roll besides punk where that essential element of rebellion still exists. My parents did to me what happened to that kid in the video. Maybe some kid somewhere who's getting beat up on can feel better thinking about me dragging that father downstairs by his hair. The message of Twisted Sister is personal freedom. If you like what you are, #@%! what everybody else thinks" (Dee Snider, *Musician*, September 1984, p. 42).

"Heavy metal is like psychotherapy. If you can't afford a doctor, listen to metal, dance around to the music. Then you can go home and kill your parents" (Dee Snider, quoted on *Talk Back With Bob Larson*, March 26, 1985).

The Twisted Sister video "I Want to Rock" shows a school boy chasing his teacher through the school until the teacher gets blown up.

Two of Bon Jovi's songs, "Living in Sin" and "Wild in the Streets" encouraged rebellion against parents.

"I don't need no license to sign on no line, and I don't need no preacher, to tell me you're mine. ... I know they have a hard time, and your daddy don't approve, but I don't need your daddy telling us what we should do. ... Baby, can you tell me where we fit in, I call it love, they call it living in sin..." (Bon Jovi, "Living in Sin").

"A member of the boy's brigade had a date with the girl next door/ You know it made her daddy crazy but it only made her want him more ... So she headed out thru her bathroom window/ What her daddy didn't know was gonna be alright" (Bon Jovi, "Wild in the Streets").

In her song "Control," Janet Jackson sings the rock & roll philosophy: "This is a story about control. My control. Control of what, I say? Control of what I do, and this time I'm gonna do it my way. ... got my own mind. I want to make my own decision; when it has to do with my life, I want to be the one in control..."

“[Our music is intended] to change one set of values to another ... free minds ... free dope ... free bodies ... free music” (Paul Kantner of the Jefferson Airplane, Ben Fong-Torres, “Grace Slick with Paul Kantner,” *The Rolling Stone Interviews*, 1971, p. 447). The Jefferson Airplane’s profane album *Volunteers* glorified revolution and called upon young people to become “outlaws in America” and to “tear down the walls.”

In the long album version of the song “Controversy,” Prince sings, “I wish there were no black and white/ I wish there were no rules.” His song “When Two Are in Love” says, “Nothing’s forbidden and nothing’s taboo.”

Rapper Ice Cube’s rebellion is evident in his music and in statements he has made to the press: “I feel like this. If I’m a kid, I’m getting chastised by my parents, by teachers, by people in the community, authorities, grandmothers. When the kids go out to party, they’re sick of getting told what to do. They’re sick of having people go down their throats, telling them how to act” (Ice Cube, cited by Turner, *Hungry for Heaven*, p. 15).

Jim Morrison, lead singer for The Doors, was a drug-soaked rebel. He said, “I’ve always been attracted to ideas that were about revolt against authority--when you make your peace with authority you become an authority. I like ideas about the breaking away or overthrowing of established order--I am interested in anything about revolt, disorder, chaos, especially activity that seems to have no meaning” (Doors press kit). He sang “We want the world and we want it NOW!” At his concerts he would shout, “There are no rules; there are no limits.” He and his band had a wicked influence upon the 1960s generation, and their strange music continues to have the same influence today.

Gene Simmons of KISS said, “We’ve always been committed to warping those little minds out there who get drivel on TV, like ‘Father Knows Best,’ and think that’s what home life is all about” (*US*, Jan. 14, 1985, p. 30). He also said, “We wanted to look like we crawled out from under a rock in Hell. We wanted parents to look at us and instantly want to throw up” (*Hellhounds on Their Trail*, p. 130). In a debate with rock critic Dan Peters, Simmons said: “What I write is pretty much a belief in a certain lifestyle which is a free soul, a free person, doing basically what he wants to do without hurting anybody else” (WCCO-TV, *Five P.M. Report*, Feb. 18, 1983). In 1984, Simmons openly advised young people to rebel against their parents: “Survival’s gotta do with believing in yourself, period. People are going to tell you, ‘You can’t do this. You can’t do that.’ They can all go ---- ... You don’t need them around, and that includes your parents. ... Get rid of those leeches and go after your dreams” (*Faces*, Dec. 1984). Notice the rebellious lyrics to the following Kiss songs:

“My parents think I’m crazy/ And they hate the things I do/ I’m stupid and I’m lazy/
Man, if they only knew/ How flaming youth will set the world on fire/ Flaming youth,
our flag is flying higher” (KISS, “Flaming Youth”).

“Listenin’ to the teacher/ Bosses and the preacher/ Ain’t never done nobody
good...” (KISS, “Tomorrow and Tonight”).

Cyndi Lauper rebelliously said the church, the family, and the state are “the three biggest oppressors of women that will ever come along” (*Newsweek*, March 4, 1985, p. 50).

Sammy Hagar’s 1984 hit, “I Can’t Drive 55,” promoted rebellion against the law. The song’s video depicted the band members breaking out of jail, defying the judge, proclaiming lawless liberty, and destroying the courtroom.

The Canadian group Loverboy have a song titled “Turn Me Loose,” in which they sing: “Makin’ love with whoever I please, I gotta do it my way, or no way at all.”

Quiet Riot promotes rebellion to parents. Their video “Party All Night Long” depicts a house-wrecking party thrown by kids while the parents are away. Quiet Riot’s lead singer says, “Kids love to have things their parents don’t like” (Kevin DuBrow, *Rock Fever*, July 1984).

Rebellion oozes from Scorpions’ music and concerts. The song “Rock You Like a Hurricane” says, “What is wrong with another sin?” The cover to the U.S. version of their album *Virgin Killer* shows the band with fists raised against authority.

Trent Reznor’s (Nine Inch Nails) rebellion oozes from his statement: “I’d rather die than give you control.”

Offspring’s 1994 album, *Smash*, sold over four million copies. Their music is “full of obscenities, angst, and meaninglessness.” Their song “Cool to Hate” says, “I never have nothing good to say/ I’d rather tear things down than build them up/ I’m only happy when I’m in my misery...”

“...the whole idea of rock ‘n’ roll is to offend your parents” (Rock star King Coffey, *Entertainment Today*, August 27, 1996).

Joe Armstrong of Green Day told Rolling Stone magazine that his mother said he is disrespectful and indecent and that if his father were alive, he would be ashamed of him. Their *Dookie* album was described as “lyrics that talk about mass destruction (‘Having a Blast’), self-loathing and insanity (‘Basket Case’), and hatred of elders (‘Burnout’).” It is called “a parent’s nightmare.”

Rob Stryker of White Zombie says, “We’re just trying to communicate some feelings of violence, anger, and hatred” (*The Truth about Rock*, p. 58).

The video “Rock High School” by Heaven shows rock stars throwing away their books and battling a principal and high school guards.

The rock movie *Footloose* depicts young people in rebellion against societal laws, parents and preachers.

Marilyn Manson (real name Brian Warner) was educated in a Christian school. He admitted to *MTV News* that his band is about resentment toward Christianity: "Being a 13-year-old kid, and having someone tell you on a daily basis that this is the final hour and that the Antichrist was coming and it was going to be the end of the world. You know, I would stay up every night and have nightmares about this and then finally 1984 passed, and all those years that they said was going to be the end, I developed a real hard shell, you know, that really became what Marilyn Manson is, IT WAS RESENTMENT" (*The Week in Rock*, MTV, Jan. 17, 1997).

Limp Bizkit sing a vicious song with the words "give me something to break" repeated over and over.

The punk band Sex Pistols "stood for nothing" and "was against everything." The group's first single, "Anarchy in the U.K." was banned in Britain. In it, Rotten cried out: "I am the anti-Christ ... I want to be ... anarchy!" Their second record was also banned from airplay in Britain because of its mockery of the Queen, though it sold well and was listed as the #1 single.

The British-born Tom Robinson (b. 1951) rebelled against his father and was sent to a "home for maladjusted boys" at age 17. There he met guitarist Danny Kustow, and these two rebels, joined by Mark Ambler and Brian Taylor, formed the Tom Robinson Band in 1977. Robinson later described his music: "After ten years of bland, brilliant music, we were back to what Rock 'n' Roll should be--nasty, crude, rebellious people's music" (Tom Robinson, punk rocker, *Dictionary of American Pop/Rock*, p. 294).

In "Another Brick in the Wall," Pink Floyd encourages young people to rebel against their parents and teachers. "We don't need no education. We don't need no thought control... I ain't did nothing to you. I ain't dumb, I ain't stupid ... Hey, teacher, leave us kids alone..."

Alice Cooper was conscious of the rebellion he encouraged in young people: "If I were a kid, Alice would be my hero. He's a rebellion symbol. He doesn't have to answer to anybody" (*Circus*, Aug. 24, 1976). "Rebellion is the basis for our group. Some of the kids who listen to us are really deranged; but they look up to us as heroes because their parents hate us too much" (*Circus*, February 1972, p. 61).

Brian Setzer of the Stray Cats understands the rebellion of rock & roll: "Rockabilly ... it's definitely teenage rebellion. ... The lyrics to our songs are the things I know about: cars, bikes, getting kicked out of school, all the good things in life. Dumb stuff. Nobody wants to listen to Mom and Dad, me included. So you want a song to go with that, something you can play really loud on your stereo so Mom and Dad can hear it! It's not just the music. Half of it is being an individual. A rebel. This is what I choose to be ... a rockabilly rebel" (*Seventeen* magazine, April 1973, pp. 167,193).

Big Black's "blistering anthems like 'The Ugly American' and 'Texas' were packed with a sonic and lyrical aggression that spit rage at everything and anyone in shouting

“Revenge” dedicated to the Los Angeles Police Department: “Revenge!/ I’ll watch you bleed/ Revenge!/ That’s all I read.”

The punk rock band Pennywise has produced several albums that are described as “pep talks for sullen adolescents” (*Trouser Press Guide to ‘90s Rock*). The song “Rules” has rebellious lyrics such as these: “the only rules you should live by ... rules made up by you.”

Michael Hutchence of the Australian group INXS, who committed suicide by hanging, admitted that his love for rock music stemmed from rebellion: “[Rock] music was for me, like, I never wanted my dad to like it” (“Rocked to Death,” *E network*, Dec. 9, 1999).

“[My long hair] is a flag. It’s Tarzan. I’ll always be anti-establishment” (David Lee Roth of Van Halen, cited by John Makujina, *Measuring the Music*, p. 73).

Public Enemy’s song “Fight the Power” epitomizes the defiance and rebellion of rock and roll.

Judas Priest’s song “Breaking the Law” encourages and glorifies rebellion.

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